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Environment and sustainable development: implementation of and follow-up to the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, including the outcome of the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly for the purpose of an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of Agenda 21

Report of the Second Committee*

Rapporteur: Mr. Uladzimir **Gerus** (Belarus)

I. Introduction

1. The Second Committee held a substantive debate on agenda item 94 (see A/53/609, para. 2). Action on sub-item (a) was taken at the 35th and 42nd meetings, on 6 November and 1 December 1998. An account of the Committee's consideration of the sub-item is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.2/53/SR.35 and 42).

II. Consideration of draft resolutions A/C.2/53/L.25 and A/C.2/53/L.53

2. At the 35th meeting, on 6 November, at the request of the representative of Indonesia, the representative of India, on behalf of the sponsors, namely, the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Implementation of commitments undertaken at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly" (A/C.2/53/L.25), which read:

* The report of the Committee on this item will be issued in seven parts, under the symbol A/53/609 and Add.1–6.

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"*The General Assembly*,

"*Recalling* the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, which was held at Rio de Janeiro from 3 to 14 June 1992, and the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly for the purpose of an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of Agenda 21, which was held in New York from 23 to 27 June 1997,

"*Reaffirming* that Agenda 21 remains the fundamental programme of action for achieving sustainable development, and that the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, adopted at the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly, will enhance the full implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development,

"*Recognizing* that the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 includes a statement of commitment to Agenda 21 and the goals of sustainable development, an assessment of progress made since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in all main areas of Agenda 21 and other outcomes of the Conference, a broad range of decisions and recommendations aimed at fostering progress in various sectoral and cross-sectoral areas of Agenda 21, in particular in its means of implementation, decisions aimed at strengthening global and regional institutional arrangements for achieving sustainable development, and recommendations on the future methods of work of the Commission on Sustainable Development and the programme of work of the Commission for the period 1998–2002,

"*Also recognizing* that a mutually supportive balance between international and national efforts is needed in the pursuit of sustainable development, and that the gap between developed and developing countries points to the continued need for a dynamic and enabling international economic environment supportive of international cooperation, particularly in the fields of finance, technology transfer, debt and trade, if the momentum for global progress towards sustainable development is to be maintained and increased,

"*Noting with concern* that the assessment and review of progress made by the General Assembly at its nineteenth special session concluded that although some progress had been made the overall trends with respect to the global environment had not improved,

"*Also noting* the convening of the first Global Environment Facility Assembly at New Delhi from 1 to 3 April 1998 and the conclusion of the negotiations on the second replenishment of the Facility,

"*Further noting* that the next comprehensive review of the implementation of Agenda 21 is scheduled to be carried out in 2002 by the General Assembly,

"1. *Stresses* the need to accelerate the full implementation of Agenda 21 and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21;

"2. *Recognizes* that the Commission on Sustainable Development, within its mandate as specified in General Assembly resolution 47/191, will continue to provide the central forum for reviewing progress and urging further implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and other commitments made at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, for conducting a high-level policy debate aimed at consensus-building

on sustainable development, and for catalyzing action and long-term commitment on sustainable development at all levels;

"3. *Calls upon* the Commission on Sustainable Development to continue to undertake these tasks in complementing and providing linkages to the work of other United Nations organs, organizations and bodies acting in the field of sustainable development, to play its role in assessing the challenges of globalization as they relate to sustainable development, and to perform its functions in coordination with other subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council and related organizations and institutions, including making recommendations, within its mandate, to the Council, bearing in mind the related outcomes of recent United Nations conferences;

"4. *Emphasizes* that the achievement of more substantive results by the next review of the implementation of Agenda 21 in 2002 will require concerted efforts at all levels, and calls upon the developed countries to fulfil their commitments with respect to financial resources and the transfer of environmentally sound technologies and capacity-building;

"5. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in close collaboration with all relevant parts of the United Nations system, including the Global Environment Facility, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Development Programme and the regional commissions, to prepare and submit an annual analytical report, beginning at the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly, on the measures undertaken by these bodies to accelerate implementation of Agenda 21 and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, including identification of constraints and recommendations on how to address these constraints;

"6. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to include in that annual report the outcome of relevant deliberations in the Commission on Sustainable Development under its multi-year programme of work with a view to facilitating preparations for the forthcoming review of the implementation of Agenda 21 in 2002;

"7. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-fourth session, under the item entitled 'Environment and sustainable development', a sub-item entitled 'Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21'."

3. At the 42nd meeting, on 1 December, the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, David Prendergast (Jamaica), introduced a draft resolution entitled "Implementation of and follow-up to the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly" (A/C.2/53/L.53), which he submitted on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/53/L.25.

4. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/53/L.53 (see para. 6).

5. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/53/L.53, draft resolution A/C.2/53/L.25 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

III. Recommendation of the Second Committee

6. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Implementation of and follow-up to the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly

The General Assembly,

Recalling the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, which was held at Rio de Janeiro from 3 to 14 June 1992, and the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly for the purpose of an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of Agenda 21, which was held in New York from 23 to 27 June 1997,

Reaffirming that Agenda 21[1] is the fundamental programme of action for achieving sustainable development, and that the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21,[2] adopted at the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly, will enhance the full implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development,

Recognizing that the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 includes a statement of commitment to Agenda 21 and the goals of sustainable development, an assessment of progress made since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in all main areas of Agenda 21 and other outcomes of the Conference, and recommendations on the future methods of work of the Commission on Sustainable Development and the programme of work of the Commission for the period 1998–2002,

Recognizing also that mutually supportive efforts at the national and international levels are needed in the pursuit of sustainable development, and that the gap between developed and developing countries points to the continuing need for a dynamic and enabling international economic environment supportive of international cooperation, particularly in the fields of finance, technology transfer, debt and trade, if the momentum for global progress towards sustainable development is to be maintained and increased,

Noting with concern that during the assessment and review of progress made at its nineteenth special session, the General Assembly concluded that although some progress had been made, especially at the local level, the overall trends with respect to the global environment had not improved, and emphasizing that the implementation of Agenda 21 in a comprehensive manner remains vitally important and is now more urgent than ever,

Noting also the convening of the first Assembly of the Global Environment Facility at New Delhi from 1 to 3 April 1998 and the conclusion of the second replenishment of the Facility,

Noting further that the next review of the implementation of Agenda 21 is scheduled to be carried out by the General Assembly in 2002,

1. *Stresses* the need to accelerate the full implementation of Agenda 21[1] and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21;[2]

2. *Recognizes* that the Commission on Sustainable Development, within its mandate as specified in General Assembly resolution 47/191 of 22 December 1992 and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, will continue to provide the central forum for reviewing progress and for urging further implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and other commitments made

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[1] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3–14 June 1992*, vol. I, Resolutions Adopted by the Conference (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex II.

[2] Resolution S-19/2, annex.

at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development or as a result of it, for conducting a high-level policy debate aimed at consensus-building on sustainable development, for catalyzing action and long-term commitment on sustainable development at all levels and for urging further implementation of Agenda 21;

3. *Calls upon* the Commission on Sustainable Development to continue to undertake these tasks in complementing and providing interlinkages to the work of other United Nations organs, organizations and bodies active in the field of sustainable development, to play its role in assessing the challenges of globalization as they relate to sustainable development and to perform its functions in coordination with other subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council and with related organizations and institutions, including making recommendations, within its mandate, to the Council, bearing in mind the interrelated outcomes of recent United Nations conferences;

4. *Emphasizes* that the achievement of more substantive results by the next review of the implementation of Agenda 21 in 2002 will require concerted efforts at all levels, including by Governments, and calls upon all countries to fulfil their commitments to Agenda 21, and in this context calls upon developed countries to fulfil the commitments they have undertaken with respect to financial resources and the transfer of environmentally sound technology;

5. *Underscores* the importance of the continued active and collaborative involvement of all relevant parts of the United Nations system in the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, and requests the Secretary-General, in close collaboration with all relevant parts of the United Nations system and taking into account the outcome of the deliberations in the Commission on Sustainable Development, to submit to the General Assembly for its consideration at future sessions, through the Economic and Social Council in view of its coordination function, an analytical report on the measures taken within the United Nations system to accelerate the implementation of Agenda 21 and of the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, including identification of constraints and recommendations on how to address those constraints;

6. *Stresses* the importance of high-quality preparations for the forthcoming ten-year review of Agenda 21 and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, and requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly for consideration at its fifty-fifth session a report on possible ways and means of ensuring effective preparations for the review;

7. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-fourth session, under the item entitled "Environment and sustainable development", a sub-item entitled "Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21".